BRITISH COLUMBIA
The Best Place on Earth

BCStats

Infoline

Contact: bcstats.infoline@gov.bc.ca Issue: 08-39 September 26th, 2008

- **Inflation unchanged at 3.3% in August**
- **Retail sales down 0.8% in July**
- **Number of BC births rises 2.2%**

Prices

- **British Columbia's year-over-year inflation rate remained at 3.3% in August.** Soaring energy costs (+23.4%), particularly gasoline (+30.7%), kept the inflation rate at its highest level since March of 2003. Excluding energy, the Consumer Price Index (CPI) was up 1.5% in August.

  Food bills were 3.9% higher as the cost of meals at restaurants rose 2.8% and the price of groceries was up 4.5%. Shelter costs (+4.0%) were also on the rise, as prices for both owned (+2.7%) and rented (+2.1%) accommodations climbed. Increases in the cost of electricity (+4.1%), water (+9.0%), piped gas (+20.7%) and fuel oil (+40.3%) were all substantial, leaving the overall cost of household utilities significantly higher (+12.8%) than in the same month last year. On the other hand, homeowners did get some relief in the cost for household furnishings & equipment (-1.9%).

  Transportation costs were up 7.4% in August, fuelled by the hike in the price of gasoline (+30.7%). The cost of operating (+16.2%), insuring (+5.2%) and maintaining (+1.6%) a vehicle more than outweighed the decreases in the cost of purchasing and leasing an automobile (-7.1%).

  British Columbians were forced to dig deeper into their wallets for alcohol & tobacco products (+1.4%) as well as health & personal care (+0.7%) and education & reading (+1.4%) materials. However, prices for clothing (-1.0%), footwear (-1.8%) and recreation equipment & services (-6.5%) continued to fall.

  The CPI in Vancouver (+3.5%) was slightly higher than the provincial average in August, while the inflation rate in Victoria (+2.9%) was significantly lower. *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

- **The nation's inflation rate was 3.5% in August, the largest 12-month increase since the 4.2% growth rate recorded in March, 2003.** Higher prices a' the pump (+26.3%) fuelled inflation across the country, alongside rising prices for food (+4.5%) and shelter (+5.3%). Although inflation rates were higher in all provinces, the cost of goods and services in the three easternmost provinces continued to face the highest rise in consumer prices. *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

The Economy

- **Sales by retailers in the province continued to seesaw in July, slipping 0.8% (*seasonally adjusted*) to $4.8 billion.** Across the country, gains in retail sales were seen in six provinces, most markedly in New Brunswick (+3.0%) and Newfoundland & Labrador (+2.2%). Other than BC, sales were off in Alberta, Manitoba (each -0.8%) and PEI (-1.0%).

  Nationally, retailers saw sales inch down (-0.1%) as a decline in the automotive sector was offset by strength in five of the seven other major sectors. *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

- **There were 44,680 British Columbians receiving regular Employment Insurance (EI) benefits in July, an 8.7% jump (*seasonally adjusted*) over June.** Nationally, there were 6.1% more people receiving regular EI benefits. Manitoba (+21.1%) posted the biggest increase, but the number of beneficiaries was up in every province except Quebec (-1.5%).
  Data Source: Statistics Canada

- **Sawmills and planing mills in BC produced substantially less (-25.5%) lumber this July**

Report

Ethnicity and Visible Minority Characteristics of BC's Population

Did you know...
Canadians are more likely to use technology to connect socially with friends and family (97%) than to connect in person (79%). *Source: Ipsos Canada*

than in the same month last year. Both coastal mills (-25.3%) and those in the Interior (-25.5%) slowed their output. Canadian lumber production slipped 19.2%, largely due to significant downturns in BC and Ontario (-26.8%). Quebec (+20.9%), Canada's second-biggest lumber producing province, was the only region to see an increase in production of sawn lumber. Year-to-date, BC sawmills have accounted for over half of the nation's lumber production.

Data Source: Statistics Canada

Travel

- **In the peak summer month of August, Vancouver International Airport was the second-busiest airport in the country, after Toronto's Pearson Airport.** Last month, 35,765 aircraft took off or landed in Vancouver, compared to 37,649 in Toronto. The third-busiest airport was Montreal/St-Hubert, with 25,205 aircraft arrivals and departures. The 41 largest Canadian airports (with NAV CANADA air traffic control towers) reported 459,756 aircraft take-offs and landings in August down 1.2% compared with August 2007. *Data Source: Transport Canada*

Births & Fertility

- **There were 41,729 births in British Columbia in 2006, up 2.2% from the number recorded in 2005.** Nationally, the number of births registered totalled 354,617, an increase of 3.6% over the previous year.

  The increase in the number of births reflects rising fertility among women in their thirties. BC mothers aged 30 to 34 accounted for 31.9% of all births in 2006 while teenage fertility (mothers aged 19 and younger) continued to decline. The average age of women that gave birth in 2006 remained at 29.9 years, slightly higher than the national average of 29.3 years. Mothers in Ontario were the oldest in the nation with an average age of 30.0 years. In 2006, the fertility rate of Canadian women aged 30 to 34 surpassed that of women aged 25 to 29 for the first time.

  Data Source: S.C. Cat. #84F0210-XIE

- **BC's total fertility rate (i.e., the average number of children that women aged 15 to 49 will have in their lifetime) remained at 1.41 in 2006, among the lowest in the country.** Newfoundland & Labrador (1.38), Nova Scotia (1.40), New Brunswick (1.46) and Ontario (1.52) all recorded fertility rates lower than the national average of 1.54 per woman. Saskatchewan (1.92) had the highest total fertility rate among the provinces. These rates were largely unchanged from those recorded in 2005. Among the territories, the total fertility rate was highest in Nunavut (2.84 births per woman), where the population is the youngest in Canada.

  At 9.7, the province's crude birth rate (the number of live births per 1,000 people) in 2006 was the fourth lowest in the country and well below the national average of 10.9. Alberta (13.4 births per 100,000 population) had the highest crude birth rate among the provinces.

  Data Source: S.C. Cat. #84F0210-XIE

- **The proportion of first births occurring among Canadian women aged 35 and older has increased significantly over the past 20 years.** In 1987, just four percent of first births occurred among mothers aged 35 and over, and by 2005 (11%), the rate had nearly tripled. The share of first births occurring among women in their early 30s (30 to 34) also climbed substantially over the same period (from 15% in 1987 to 26% in 2005).

  Children of older mothers (aged 35 or over) were significantly more likely to have been breastfed and breastfed longer compared with children of mothers in the younger group (aged 25 to 29). About 43% of children of older mothers were breastfed for more than six months compared with 26% of children of mothers aged 25 to 29.

  Older mothers are at a slightly increased risk of pre-natal and birth-related complications. For example, in 2005, approximately 17% of children of older mothers were born pre-maturely, compared with 11% in the younger group. Also, about 40% of children of older mothers were delivered by caesarean section, almost twice the proportion of children of mothers in the younger group (23%). *Data Source: S.C. Cat. #89599-XIE*

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For data originating from Statistics Canada, data sourced to 'Statistics Canada' has been retrieved from CANSIM, the agency's electronic database; otherwise the source is identified as 'SC' plus the catalogue number.

Infoline Report

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Originally published in
2006 Census Fast Facts Issue 2006-12

Ethnicity and Visible Minority Characteristics of BC's Population

Ethnic origin, as defined in the Census, refers to the ethnic or cultural group(s) to which an individual's ancestors belonged. Visible minority, on the other hand, refers to whether or not a person, under criteria established by the Employment Equity Act, is non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour. Under the Act, an Aboriginal person is not considered to be a visible minority.

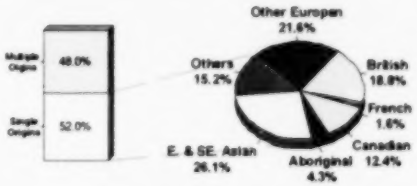
The 2006 Census reported that for every 100 people living in B.C. at the time of the census, about 52 belonged to a single ethnic origin and 48 belonged to more than one ethnic origin (multiple origins). Taking both single and multiple responses together, people with an English ethnic origin represented the largest population in B.C. On the other hand, Chinese represented the largest ethnic group in the B.C. population who reported a single ethnicity. In 2006, of those who reported a single ethnic origin, 17.7 per cent were Chinese, 12.4 per cent Canadian, and 11.4 per cent English. Also, 4.3 per cent reported Aboriginal as their ethnic origin.

Top 10 Reported Single Ethnic Origins for B.C. -2006

	Number Reported	% of Total Population	% of Single Origin
Chinese	377,550	9.2%	17.7
Canadian	264,515	6.4%	12.4
English	242,610	5.9%	11.4
East Indian	202,465	4.9%	9.5
German	114,130	2.8%	5.4
Scottish	87,025	2.1%	4.1
Filipino	65,250	1.6%	3.1
Irish	46,105	1.1%	2.2
Italian	45,680	1.1%	2.1
Ukrainian	37,450	0.9%	1.8

The high inflow of Asian immigrants to B.C. during the past two decades had helped shift the ethnic mosaic of the province. Large numbers of immigrant landings from Asian countries including China, India, the Philippines, South Korea and Taiwan have gradually made the Asian ethnic group a larger share of the population in B.C. The proportion of the B.C. population who reported a single East Asian or South East Asian ethnic origin had increased from 9.0 per cent in 1986 to 18.7 per cent in 1996 then to 26.1 per cent in 2006.

B.C. Population Ethnic Origin - 2006 Census

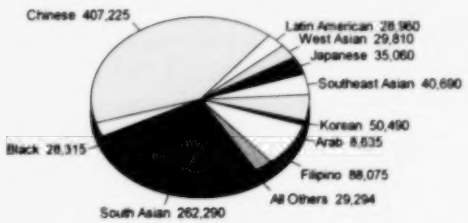


More people have been reporting Canadian as their ethnicity since 1996 when Statistics Canada modified the questions in the census form. Also, British Columbians having non-Canadian ancestors might have reported their own ethnicity as Canadian after having immigrated to Canada for a period of time or if they were born in Canada. The number of British Columbians who reported themselves as ethnic Canadians varies significantly with their generation status. Based on Statistics Canada's definition, first generation include persons who are foreign born ; second generation are those who were born in Canada with at least one parent born outside Canada; whereas third generation are Canadian born with both parents who are also Canadian born. In 2006, 0.4 per cent of those who reported a single Canadian ethnic origin were first generation, verses 5.5 per cent in the sec-

ond generation and 32.1 per cent in the third generation.

More and more British Columbians who reported themselves as ethnic Canadians may be a member of a visible minority group as a result of the recent high inflow of non-white immigrants to B.C. and Canada. In 2006, about one in every four British Columbians (24.8%) was a visible minority, representing about one million people in the province. Chinese was the single largest visible minority group, accounting for 40.0 per cent of all visible minorities in the province, followed by East Asians. A high proportion of the visible minority population were of ethnic Asian origin.

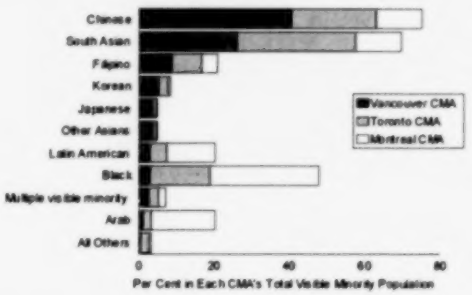
Visible Minority Population in B.C.
2006 Census



Approximately two-thirds of those in a visible minority group were born outside Canada, and a majority (60%) immigrated to the country within the last 15 years. At the time of the 2006 census, there were about 676,000 immigrants and 297,000 non-immigrants in B.C. who belonged to a visible minority group.

The visible minority population was more concentrated in the Lower Mainland. About four in every ten people who lived in the Vancouver Census Metropolitan Area (Vancouver CMA) were visible minorities. Vancouver CMA topped the other two largest CMAs (Toronto and Montreal) by having a relatively higher proportion of Chinese in its visible minority population. In 2006, 43.6 per cent of the visible minorities living in the Vancouver CMA were Chinese, compared to 22.4 per cent for the Toronto CMA and 12.2 per cent for the Montreal CMA.

Relative Distribution of Visible Minority by Origin
2006 Census



Another growing trend in the visible minority population in Canada is that the number of mixed unions (marriages) involving visible minorities has been increasing. Over the last two decades, the number of unions between one visible minority and one non-visible minority persons has increased from 2.2 per cent (of all mixed unions) in 1996 to 3.3 per cent in 2006, whereas the same statistics for unions between two different visible minority groups has climbed from 0.3 per cent to 0.6 per cent.

"Census Fast Facts" is a series of feature articles published by BC Stats focusing on different aspects of British Columbia's demography, based on the 2006 Census. Please visit:

www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/data/cen06/facts/facts.asp

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BC at a glance . . .

POPULATION (thousands)	Apr 1/08	% change on one year ago
BC	4,428.4	1.5
Canada	33,223.8	1.1
GDP and INCOME (Revised Apr 28)		
(BC - at market prices)	2007	% change on one year ago
Gross Domestic Product (GDP) *($ millions)*	190,214	5.5
GDP *($ 2002 millions)*	163,200	3.1
GDP *($ 2002 per Capita)*	37,258	1.7
Personal Disposable Income *($ 2002 per Capita)*	24,728	3.0
TRADE ($ millions, seasonally adjusted)		% change on prev. month
Manufacturing Shipments - Jul	3,306	-1.2
Merchandise Exports - Jul	2,830	-3.1
Retail Sales - Jul	4,804	-0.8
CONSUMER PRICE INDEX	% change on one year ago	12-month avg % change
(all items - Aug 2008)		
BC	3.3	1.9
Vancouver	3.5	2.1
Victoria	2.9	1.4
Canada	3.5	2.4
LABOUR FORCE (thousands)		% change on
(seasonally adjusted)	Aug '08	prev. month
Labour Force - BC	2,429	-0.1
Employed - BC	2,325	0.0
Unemployed - BC	104	-3.1
		Jul '08
Unemployment Rate - BC *(percent)*	4.3	4.4
Unemployment Rate - Canada *(percent)*	6.1	6.1
INTEREST RATES (percent)	Sep 24/08	Sep 26/07
Prime Business Rate	4.75	6.25
Conventional Mortgages - 1 year	6.65	7.05
- 5 year	6.85	7.19
US-CANADA EXCHANGE RATE	Sep 24/08	Sep 26/07
(avg. noon spot rate) Cdn $ per US $	1.0351	1.0048
(closing rate) US $ per Cdn $	0.9646	0.9958
AVERAGE WEEKLY WAGE RATE		% change on
(industrial aggregate - dollars)	Aug '08	one year ago
BC	777.68	2.8
Canada	788.85	3.5

SOURCES:

Population, Gross Domestic Product, Trade, Prices, Labour Force, Wage Rate } Statistics Canada

Interest Rates, Exchange Rates: Bank of Canada Weekly Financial Statistics

For latest Weekly Financial Statistics see www.bankofcanada.ca

Immigration & Diversity Profiles

The WelcomeBC site now features two series of graphic profiles based on the 2006 Census. Over 200 individual documents in each series reveal the characteristics of British Columbia, its regions, and communities.

www.welcomebc.ca/en/growing_your_community/trends/2006/

NEW: RSS enabled for our site

We now have two RSS feeds for our users. One provides updates for just our analytical articles; the other is for everything we do, including the analytical articles, but also announcements, data releases, and publications.

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Released this week by BC Stats

- Consumer Price Index, August 2008
- Business Indicators, September 2008
- Current Statistics, September 2008

Next week

- Migration Highlights, 2nd Quarter 2008
- Immigration Highlights, 2nd Quarter 2008
- Quarterly Regional Statistics, 2nd Quarter 2008

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